

# Military Prosecutors Say Nothing Illegal in Deaths of 29 Russian Soldiers

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**The**  **Moscow Times**

Russian military prosecutors and investigators did not find anything illegal in the deaths of 29 Russian servicemen this summer, the Vedomosti newspaper reported on Wednesday, citing letters from investigative bodies.

St. Petersburg Soldiers' Mothers, an NGO that campaigns for the rights of soldiers, had requested probes into information used in a number of media reports claiming that several dozen Russian servicemen had died in combat in Ukraine's east.

In letters to the NGO, Russia's chief military prosecutor and Investigative Committee's main military investigations department said they had found no evidence to back the claims.

"These officials are in a difficult situation. They have to deny the obvious," Ella Polyakova, head of St. Petersburg Soldiers' Mothers, told Vedomosti.

Moscow officially denies that it has soldiers in eastern Ukraine, and has said the soldiers died during military drills in the Rostov region, which borders Ukraine. But several media

investigations in Russia and Ukraine said they died in Ukraine.

In November, Lev Shlosberg, a regional lawmaker from the Russian town of Pskov who is investigating the deaths of Russian paratroopers buried in his city, got a similar response from the military prosecutors.

Western governments have repeatedly accused the Russian government of sending troops to help separatist insurgents in Ukraine's east.

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